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DECEMBER 1934

CONTENTS

WOMEN WORKERS AND THE WOMEN'S BUREAU BY MARY ANDERSON 1
A NEW SURVEY OF THE COST OF LIVING 3
OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES AMONG WOMEN WORKERS 4
EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS 8
EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLLS IN NOVEMBER 1934 9
BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN NOVEMBER 1934 4
WHAT HAPPENED TO PRICES IN NOVEMBER 1934 17
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT AND RELIEF PROGRAM 18
QUESTION AND ANSWER DEPARTMENT 19

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LABOR INFORMATION BULLETIN
DECEMBER 1934

WOMEN WORKERS ARE THE CONCERN OF THE WOMEN'S BUREAU

BY
MARY ANDERSON, CHIEF
UNITED STATES WOMEN'S BUREAU

The people of the United States are today facing a multitude of problems vitally related to the welfare of workers. The 11 million women workers, in a great variety of occupations, who either have jobs or are looking for jobs, share these problems that are common to all workers. The women employed in the United States must, in most cases, earn their own living. With them, as with men, a job is an economic necessity.

In addition to the problems common to all workers, women workers are confronted with special difficulties peculiar to their own sex. They are too often the victims of injustice and exploitation. Nor is the position of women in industry always properly understood. The fallacious notion that women's earnings are "pin money" is still widespread.

The particular function of safeguarding the interests of women workers is the duty of the Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor. The woman who makes candlewick bedspreads in her own southern mountain home for a pittance, the maid who toils for long hours in someone else's kitchen, the waitress who serves food to the public, the girl doing unskilled or semi-skilled labor in a factory or mill, the woman whose health is endangered by insanitary working conditions or a hazardous occupation, the married woman responsible for the support of her children who is denied a job because of prejudice, the qualified Negro woman who is barred from this or that kind of employment because of her race--these are a few of the many types of women workers whose interests are the concern of the Women's Bureau.

The problems pertaining to wage-earning women are at present many and varied, requiring a wide range of activities by the bureau. The question of employment standards is always a paramount issue. During the 16 years of its existence the Women's Bureau has led the way in building up standards to increase the wages of thousands of poorly paid women, to shorten their hours of labor, to improve their working conditions, and to increase their efficiency. The breakdown of these standards caused by the prolonged depression led to greater demands upon the bureau and necessitated investigations to show the growth of sweatshops and to stress the need of suppressing this menace.

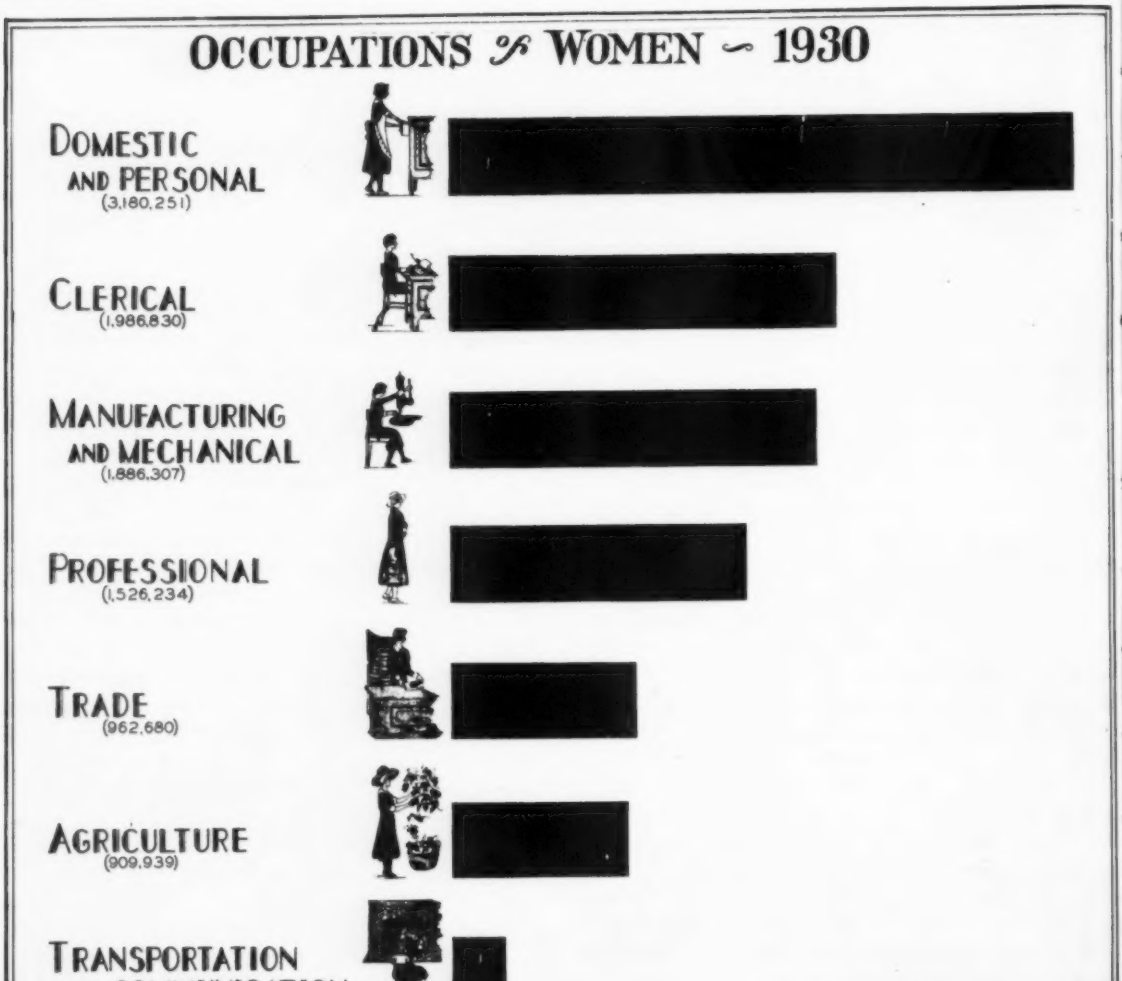
With the advent of the N. R. A. and the other recovery measures, much of the ground lost in the field of industrial standards has been regained. But despite the progress made towards Nation-wide uniform minimum-wage and maximum-hour standards, there is need for further improvement of labor conditions for women. The double wage standard with lower rates for women than for men still persists. Also, the evil of

industrial home work, though lessened by some code provisions, still flourishes in many quarters as a vicious system.

The bureau is primarily interested in women workers, both as individuals and as members of their trade-union organizations. Indirectly, however, the Women's Bureau aids

proves of advantage to the workers, in the final analysis spells benefits to industry and business, home and family, community and the nation.

The Women's Bureau serves as a clearing house for collecting and disseminating facts about women workers. Its investiga-



wage-earning men through its efforts to keep selfish interests from exploiting women in the form of "cheap and docile labor" as unwilling competitors of men. Moreover, when constant stress on the needs of women workers leads to improved conditions these often mean gains for men as well. And whatever

tions and reports are distributed free upon request. Graphic material in the form of posters, charts, and maps can be had for the asking. Other exhibits, including popular motion pictures, are lent to all willing to pay the nominal transportation charges.

A New Survey of the Cost of Living

In these times of rapidly changing prices everybody wants to know how much he can buy with his dollar, as compared with the previous week, the previous month, or a year ago. Requests for information on price changes and on changes in the cost of living come to the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the thousands. They come from all parts of the country, from cities and from the farms, from employers and from workers, from organized groups, and from individuals. Housewives are particularly anxious to discover the reasons for the changing amounts in their food baskets even though they spend the same amount of money from week to week. Is it due to faulty methods of marketing on their part or to other more important causes beyond their reach?

For a number of years the Bureau of Labor Statistics has been publishing figures showing the changes in retail prices of the principal foodstuffs in 51 cities throughout the United States. Twice a year, in June and in December, the Bureau also makes an extended field survey of changes in the prices of all the important commodities regularly consumed in the average wage earner's or salaried employee's household. In addition to foodstuffs, these large surveys include rent, clothing, furniture and furnishings, fuel and light, and other miscellaneous items which enter into the family budget.

The kind of commodities and their importance in family expenditures supply the starting point or the base from which the changes in the cost of living are measured. The purpose of the present survey is to secure a picture of how the wage earner lives. The last survey of this sort was made in 1918-1919 when in cooperation with the War Labor Board the Bureau of Labor Statistics made a study of the cost of living of 12,096 families in 92 cities, scattered over 42 States. An attempt is being made to find out what kind of house the average wage earner or salaried employee lives in; the type of fuel he uses; the kinds and the amounts of food he consumes; the kind of shoes and stockings and other clothing he wears. Twenty years ago all of us had seen automobiles,--but few workers actually possessed such a luxury. Many of us had heard of radios only as a means of communication at sea. Nowadays, the automobile and the radio, silk stockings, and an occasional visit to the beauty parlor have become items of expenditure in the households of many workers.

To make our cost of living figures truly representative we must know how the American worker is living <u>now</u>, what his income is, what he buys with his income, how much he spends on food, on shelter, on clothing, on education of his children, on medicine and insurance, and on the hundreds of other items which he has to consider when spending his weekly wage or monthly salary.

Investigations of the expenditures of families of employed wage earners and lower-salaried employees are now under way in several representative cities in the United States. The survey is in progress in New York City, Rochester, N. Y., Pittsburgh, Pa., Columbus, Ohio, Richmond, Va., Memphis, Tenn., New Orleans, La., Birmingham, Ala., Charleston, S. C., and Manchester, Dover, Berlin, and Keene of New Hampshire. In these cities the Bureau of Labor Statistics is working in cooperation with consumers' boards, local welfare groups, universities, and such other public agencies, as the Russell Sage Foundation and the New Hampshire Minimum Wage Office.

It is expected that before June 1935 work will be started in approximately 30 cities and will continue until a sufficiently large number of cities is covered to furnish a representative cross section of the country as a whole.

The study undertaken by the Bureau is not intended in any way to determine what may be considered as acceptable or desirable levels of living for an American worker. Our task is merely to find out what the present living levels are, so that we may possess a reliable and representative average or base with which to measure changes in living costs resulting from price fluctuations.

The investigators employed on the cost of living survey are given a special course of training before they are sent out to secure information. In the course of their work they call at the homes of representative wage earners to secure information from the home makers on numerous questions. The questions range all the way from asking how much the family spends for rent, electricity, gas, repairs and taxes, to the amounts spent on shoes, silk stockings, automobiles, carfare, newspapers and magazines, medical service, etc.

The home maker need not fear that this very personal information concerning the family will be broadcast throughout the neighborhood. The investigators are under oath to treat the information as absolutely confidential. Under no condition will anyone be allowed to find out what his neighbor is spending.

Whether the final figures of the Department of Labor will be truly representative of the actual expenditures made by the average American wage earner's or salaried employee's family will depend on the reliability of the reports given to our investigators. The cooperation the Bureau is now receiving from individual home makers will furnish a basis on which a solution may be attempted for the problems affecting millions of wage earners.

OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES AMONG WOMEN WORKERS

Occupational diseases result from contact with materials and ingredients used in the course of one's work. When a woman stove enameler becomes seriously poisoned from the lead in the dust-laden air of the workroom, her illness is correctly diagnosed as occupational. But no less a victim of occupational disease, though far less critically ill, is the woman salad maker in a restaurant who contracts an annoying skin affection, caused by certain types of vegetables she handles in her work.

Conclusive proof that American workers are obtaining far from adequate protection against occupational sicknesses is found in a careful analysis of industrial processes undertaken in 1922 and again in 1933 by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. The objects of these studies were, first, to determine what specific substances have poisonous effects on workers, and, second, to designate the occupations which might be considered hazardous because of the use of these dangerous substances.

NUMBER OF HAZARDOUS OCCUPATIONS

The 1922 report enumerated 52 poisonous substances and classified 700 different occupations as hazardous. In 1933 the report listed 94 poisonous substances and raised the number of hazardous occupations to 900. The vast extent of the field which should be explored is indicated by the statement of another authority in 1932 that

"some 200,000 organic chemicals alone, used in industrial processes, have yet to be investigated to determine their effects upon workers who come in contact with these chemicals while on the job." In view of the extent and the seriousness of known occupational diseases, the questions at once arise: "Why don't we hear more about them?" "What can be done to prevent them or to compensate their victims?"

INDUSTRIAL DISEASES ARE SLOW IN DEVELOPING

A recent publication of the Women's Bureau, "State Reporting of Occupational Disease", treats the subject of occupational diseases, with special attention to those types most commonly reported as occurring among women workers. One of the major reasons that the hazard is not more widely appreciated is that many industrial diseases are slow in developing and are difficult to recognize in their early stages. Not until considerable time has elapsed after exposure — in some cases only after several years -- do the more serious effects of some diseases appear. Signs and symptoms of these diseases are not evident early enough to warn the worker, and often he may absorb what may prove to be a dangerous amount of poison before he even realizes that he is ill. A case in point is the tragic death from radium poisoning of the several girls who were instructed to point the tips of the brushes in their mouths while painting the dials of watches and clocks with radium paint. These girls were in reality condemned to a merciless, slow death. But neither they nor the public became aware of it until after it was entirely too late to even alleviate their suffering.

SUSCEPTIBILITY OF WORKERS TO POISON VARIES

There is a difference in susceptibility among the individuals exposed to the same amount of poison. There are also wide ranges of susceptibility varying with race, age, and sex. Young workers, both girls and boys, have proven more susceptible than older workers to certain diseases, such as lead poisoning and tuberculosis. Women workers suffer from certain poisons far more seriously than do men, even though the period of their exposure has been shorter.

REPORTING OF INDUSTRIAL DISEASES INADEQUATE

If adequate knowledge of occupational diseases is to be developed, there must be more complete reporting of individual cases. Present reports are scattered and fragmentary. They are limited to the 12 States, 3 Territories, and the District of Columbia, which provide compensation for particular industrial diseases, and to the several additional States which provide no compensation but require reports to the health and factory inspection authorities.

Industrial accidents are dramatic and come to public attention by their very suddenness. As a result we have comparatively good workmen's compensation legislation, which in turn supplies us with adequate information on industrial accidents. This is not generally true of industrial diseases. We lack compensation legislation for occupational diseases because there is little public knowledge of the facts. On the other hand the facts necessary adequately to enlighten public policy can become available only through compensation legislation. This unfortunate vicious circle thus prevents us from knowing more about occupational diseases and rendering the necessary aid to the workers affected by them.

EFFECTS OF SOME DISEASES ON WOMEN WORKERS

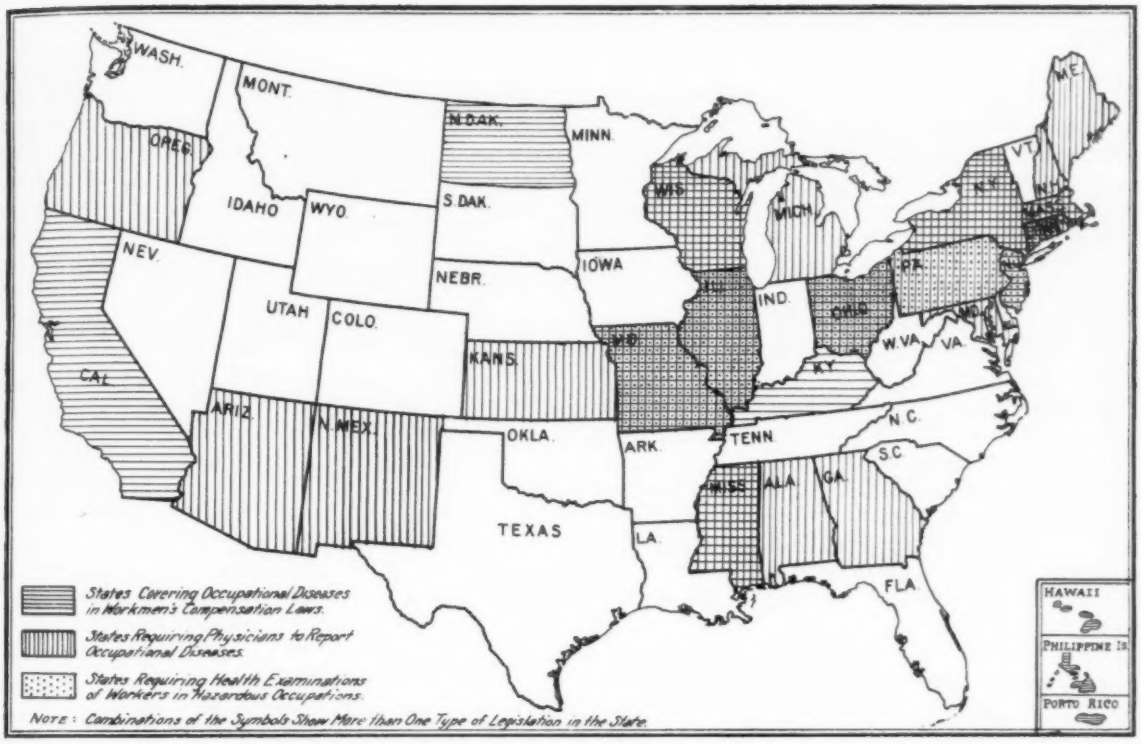
Certain of the major diseases affecting women, as reported by the States requiring their registration, have been analyzed in the Women's Bureau bulletin. Benzol is a common source of severe poisoning to women workers. It has a tendency to destroy the

DERMATITIS AFFECTS THE WORKER'S BEST TOOLS — HIS HANDS

white blood cells, causing dangerous anemia. Yet benzol is used widely in the rubber, shoe, tin can, and other important women-employing industries.

Other industrial substances are known to affect seriously the childbearing functions of women, among them mercury, carbon monoxide, and tobacco. Lead poisoning brings additional disastrous consequences, being a specific cause of stillbirths, abortions, and sterility. Scientists have proved that the poison may even be transmitted to a child by its mother through breast feeding. But the most common type of occupational disease affecting women workers is dermatitis, or the irritation of the skin. The disease may be produced by almost any substance with which the worker comes into contact while on the job. Rubber, cleaning agents, dyes, dust, oil, fruits, varnish, — these are only a few of the substances known to produce skin irritations where workers are susceptible. Dermatitis is a serious occupational hazard usually affecting the worker's best tools, his hands.

What can be done for the prevention of occupational diseases? No single solution is possible. Several legislative methods are suggested, which, if combined, may prove successful in curbing, if not completely eradicating, occupational diseases. One method is purely preventive. Substances such as phosphorus and radium, which are known to be extremely dangerous to the health and life of workers, must be prohibited outright. Since women and minors



OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE LEGISLATION IN THE UNITED STATES

are more susceptible to certain occupational diseases, their employment in those hazardous occupations should also be prohibited. All workers employed in hazardous industries must be given frequent periodic health examinations.

ADDITIONAL AND BETTER LEGISLATION NEEDED

The second method combines prevention with compensation to the victims of the disease. We need to enact more and better laws for compensation of occupational diseases. Experience has shown that this is without doubt the most effective aid to prevention. In this connection it must be emphasized that laws should provide compensation for all illnesses of an occupational origin. Compensation should not be limited only to specific poisons or specific hazardous occupations.

Compulsory requirement of detailed reports by physicians on individual cases of occupational illness must also be made a necessary part of all legislation dealing with this problem. Finally, there is need for a comprehensive system of health insurance to provide against destitution of those workers who become victims of an occupational disease. Only through the effective application and enforcement of the measures outlined can we hope to control these horrible diseases and thus prevent the needless destruction of health and life of thousands of workers.

EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS

Labor Disputes. November experienced the usual seasonal decline in the number of labor disputes and in the number of workers involved. During the month 84 new disputes were registered, as against 161 in October. There were 195 disputes in progress during the month of November, involving approximately 100,000 wage earners.

Final estimates of the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that approximately 376,000 workers were directly involved in the general strike in the textile industry last September. The estimated number covers those who actually stopped work in the textile plants and other industries affected by the strike. The workers lost approximately 3,360,000 man days of work, at an estimated cost in wages of $12,800,000.

United States Conciliation Service. During November the Conciliation Service of the United States Department of Labor was called upon to act in 50 labor disputes. In 19 cases strikes had taken place. In the other cases suspension of work was threatened.

Of the new cases, 12 strikes and 13 threatened strikes were adjusted, 6 were referred to other agencies for further action, and 19 were pending at the end of the month. In addition, nine cases pending from previous months were successfully adjusted and two cases referred for further action.

Conciliators of the Department of Labor continued to assist the Textile Labor Relations Board, the National Steel Labor Relations Board, and the National Mediation Board in adjusting textile, steel, and railroad labor disputes.

The National Labor Relations Board. The fourth report of the National Labor Relations Board, submitted to President Roosevelt through Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, covers the period from October 10 to November 9, inclusive. A total of 49 cases have been acted upon by the Board during the month. Three cases have been transmitted to the N. R. A. for removal of the Blue Eagle because of noncompliance with the Board's decisions; in two of the three cases the Blue Eagle has been removed. After study, 13 cases, most of them decided before October 10, have been referred to the Department of Justice for appropriate action.

With the establishment of offices in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Portland, Oregon, the full number of local agencies of the Board has now been realized. The continental United States is divided into 17 districts with a main office in each. In addition, there are branch offices in a number of cities, making a total of 23.

It is the purpose of this Board to make attendance at hearings convenient and inexpensive. In each district, panels representing labor, industry, and the public have been or will be established in a number of cities, in addition to those in which regional offices are maintained. To date, 43 employers, 52 workers, and 36 public representatives have been added to the panels or boards established by the National Labor Board. Further appointments will be made in the near future in order to realize the objectives of the Board.

Work Assignment Boards in the Textile Industry. The following members were appointed by the Secretary of Labor to the Work Assignment Boards for the Textile Industry: Wm. A. Mitchell, impartial chairman; E. A. Oliver, Ruth Reticker, and Godfrey C. Brown, employees' representatives; and Earle R. Stall, Harold J. Walter, and John W. Nickerson, employers' representatives.

Mr. Oliver and Mr. Nickerson will handle silk textiles; Miss Reticker and Mr. Walter, wool; Mr. Brown and Mr. Stall, cotton; Mr. Mitchell will be the impartial chairman for each group. These boards will work out a permanent plan of work assignments in the textile industry and will handle stretch-out complaints. They will function under the Textile Labor Relations Board, the members of which are Judge Walter P. Stacy, chairman, Admiral Henry A. Wiley, and Frank P. Douglass.

EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLLS IN NOVEMBER 1934

Manufacturing Industries

Seasonal declines in factory employment and pay rolls were reported in November. Estimated employment in manufacturing industries fell from 6,560,000 in October to 6,435,000 in November, a reduction of 125,000. Weekly pay rolls declined by $3,000,000--from approximately $124,000,000 in October to $121,000,000 in November.

The most pronounced changes in employment over the month were seasonal in character. The woolen and worsted goods industry, in which increased activity is usually reported, showed a gain in employment of 10 percent. Seasonal gains were also reported in the men's furnishings and agricultural implement industries, in rayon manufacture, cane-sugar refining, turpentine and rosin, hardware and glass, etc. The outstanding decreases in employment, in canning and preserving, and in the cotton-seed industries, were also seasonal. Substantial losses in employment were recorded in beverages, ice cream, men's and women's clothing, cement, tinware, and several other industries.

ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

November 1934, October 1934 and November 1933

	Number of workers employed		
	November 1934 1/	October 1934 2/	November 1933
All industries	6,435,000	6,561,300	6,384,700
Durable goods groups:			
Iron and steel	568,700	567,000	583,200
Machinery	684,000	684,000	643,500
Transportation equipment	349,400	360,100	301,600
Railroad repair shops	248,800	259,900	264,400
Nonferrous metals	214,800	212,200	205,200
Lumber	446,300	454,600	480,300
Stone, clay, and glass	182,900	181,800	176,000
Non-durable goods groups:			
Textiles	1,481,100	1,503,900	1,513,700
Leather	264,000	269,800	256,000
Foods	728,800	798,900	700,800
Tobacco	88,600	90,400	91,400
Paper and printing	515,200	512,000	500,900
Chemicals	361,800	364,300	361,100
Rubber	102,900	103,900	116,400
Unclassified	197,700	198,500	190,200

1/ Preliminary 2/ Revised

Employment in Durable Goods Industries. The durable goods industries are engaged in the manufacture of machinery, automobiles and trucks, furniture, and such other articles made of iron and steel, lumber, stone, clay, glass, etc., which need not be rapidly replaced. In November 1934 these industries supplied employment to 2,695,000 workers. This is a reduction of 25,000 from the 2,720,000 employed during the previous month.

The largest drop in employment occurred in the railroad-repair shops group, which employed 11,100 fewer workers. Transportation equipment employed 10,700 and the lumber industry 8,300 fewer workers. There was no change in the number employed in machinery manufacturing. Employment increased by 2,600 in the nonferrous metals, 1,700 in iron and steel, and 1,100 in stone, clay, and glass.

Total employment in the durable goods industries in November of this year was 40,700 larger than in November 1933. Transportation equipment provided jobs for 47,800 more workers; machinery manufacturing added 40,500; nonferrous metals 9,600; and the stone, clay, and glass group, 6,900. These gains were partly offset by losses in the other durable goods groups. In comparison with November of a year ago, employment was reduced by 34,000 in the lumber industry, 15,600 in railroad-repair shops, and 14,500 in iron and steel.

Employment in Non-durable Goods Industries. The non-durable goods industries are engaged in the manufacture of such products as canned goods, flour, cigars and cigarettes, which are consumed at once, or such articles as shoes, clothing, and other items which wear out relatively fast and must be rapidly replaced. In November 1934 these industries employed approximately 3,740,000 workers, or 101,500 less than in October. With the exception of the paper and printing group, which added 3,200 workers, all major classes of non-durable goods industries employed fewer workers in November than in October, despite the increase in employment in certain individual industries, such as woolen and worsted or rayon. The losses in employment were:

70,100 in foodstuffs
22,800 in textiles
5,800 in leather and its products
2,500 in chemicals
1,800 in tobacco manufactures
800 in unclassified industries

Compared with November 1933, total employment in the non-durable goods industries increased by 9,600. The food industry added 28,000 workers; the paper and printing group 14,300; leather and its manufactures 8,000; chemicals 700; and the unclassified industries 7,500. These gains in employment were reduced by losses of 32,600 in textiles, 13,500 in rubber, and 2,800 in tobacco manufactures.

Pay Rolls Decreased in the Durable Goods Industries. The total weekly pay roll in the durable goods industries in November was estimated at $52,500,000, or $350,000 less than in October. Iron and steel, the nonferrous metals, machinery manufacturing, and the stone, clay, and glass group had larger weekly pay rolls in November than in October. The increases varied in amounts from $9,000 in stone, clay, and glass to $345,000 in iron and steel. But these gains were not sufficient to offset the losses in the weekly pay rolls of the other durable goods industries, which were: $325,000 in railroad-repair shops, $224,000 in transportation equipment, and $196,000 in the lumber industry.

Compared with November 1933, the weekly income of the wage earners employed in the durable goods industries in November 1934 registered a gain of $4,090,000. Railroad-repair shops were the only group with a smaller weekly pay roll as compared with November a year ago. There was practically no change in the weekly wage income of the lumber workers. The other durable goods industries had substantially larger payrolls than last year. The pay roll gains were:

$1,650,000 in machinery manufacturing
1,640,000 in transportation equipment
471,000 in nonferrous metals
340,000 in stone, clay, and glass
223,000 in iron and steel

Pay Rolls Decreased in the Non-durable Goods Industries. Wage earners in the non-durable goods industries suffered a loss

of $2,705,000 in their weekly wage incomes in November, as compared with the previous month. Paper and printing was the only group which registered a slight increase in the weekly pay rolls. It was estimated at $15,000. The other non-durable goods groups had smaller weekly wage bills than in October. The losses in the weekly purchasing power of the workers employed in these industries were:

$1,140,000 in textiles
1,101,000 in foodstuffs
231,000 in leather and its products
56,000 in chemicals
24,000 in rubber
164,000 in unclassified industries

Compared with November 1933, the average weekly pay rolls in the nondurable goods industries were approximately $4,055,000 larger this November. Tobacco manufactures and chemicals were the only two groups with smaller pay rolls than a year ago. The workers employed in the other non-durable groups had larger weekly wage incomes than last year. The gains were:

$1,650,000 in foodstuffs
1,065,000 in paper and printing
520,000 in chemicals
444,000 in textiles
58,000 in leather and its products
374,000 in unclassified industries

ESTIMATED WEEKLY PAY ROLLS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

November 1934, October 1934 and November 1933

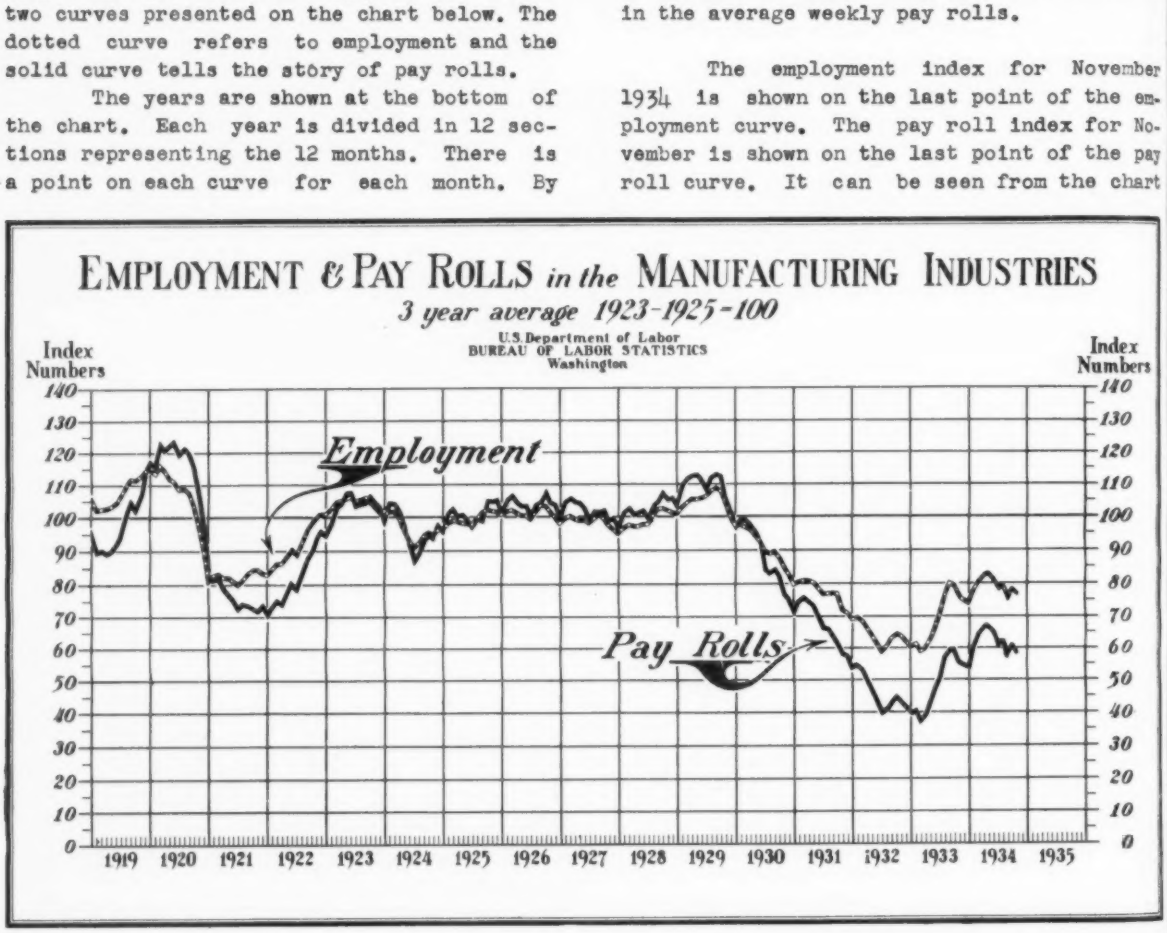
	Amount of weekly pay roll		
	November 1934 1/	October 1934 2/	November 1933
All industries	$121,085,000	$124,138,000	$112,940,000
Durable goods groups:			
Iron and steel	10,899,000	10,554,000	10,676,000
Machinery	13,531,000	13,483,000	11,882,000
Transportation equipment	8,280,000	8,504,000	6,639,000
Railroad repair shops	6,022,000	6,347,000	6,250,000
Nonferrous metals	4,309,000	4,214,000	3,838,000
Lumber	6,224,000	6,520,000	6,232,000
Stone, clay, and glass	3,161,000	3,152,000	2,821,000
Non-durable goods groups:			
Textiles	22,522,000	23,662,000	22,078,000
Leather	4,261,000	4,492,000	4,203,000
Foods	14,651,000	15,752,000	13,001,000
Tobacco	1,086,000	1,090,000	1,115,000
Paper and printing	12,308,000	12,293,000	11,245,000
Chemicals	7,565,000	7,621,000	7,045,000
Rubber	1,998,000	2,022,000	2,021,000
Unclassified	4,268,000	4,432,000	3,894,000

1/ Preliminary 2/ Revised

Trend of Employment and Pay Rolls in Manufacturing Industries

The story of employment and pay rolls in manufacturing industries from January 1919 through November 1934 is told in the two curves presented on the chart below. The dotted curve refers to employment and the solid curve tells the story of pay rolls.

The years are shown at the bottom of the chart. Each year is divided in 12 sections representing the 12 months. There is a point on each curve for each month. By applying a ruler to any point on the two curves one can easily find from the figures on the sides of the chart the index number which shows what happened to employment and to the pay rolls during the month.



Meaning of the Index Numbers. Index numbers are a simple method of showing the relative conditions of employment and pay rolls from month to month as compared with the employment and pay rolls of a given period, called the base. The Bureau of Labor Statistics uses the 3 years, 1923-1925, as its base from which it measures changes in the number of workers employed per month and in the average weekly pay rolls.

The employment index for November 1934 is shown on the last point of the employment curve. The pay roll index for November is shown on the last point of the pay roll curve. It can be seen from the chart that the employment index for November 1934 was approximately 77. This indicates that for every 100 workers employed on the average during the base years, 1923-25, there were 77 persons employed in November 1934. The pay roll index for November 1934 was approximately 59.5. This means that $595 was distributed in weekly wages during the month of November for every $1,000 paid out in wages during the base period, 1923-1925.

Hours of Work and Earnings in Manufacturing Industries

There has been practically no change in the average number of hours worked per week in manufacturing industries in November as compared with October and with November of last year. During these months employment averaged approximately 34 hours per week. Average hourly earnings in November remained the same as in October. They were approximately 55.5 cents as compared with 52 cents in November a year ago.

The 1934 averages are based on actual hours of work reported by 22,654 establishments with 3,214,732 employees. The 1933 figures are based on 11,183 establishments with 2,113,525 wage earners.

In five selected representative durable goods industries the average weekly hours and the average hourly earnings in November were --

Weekly hours:
- 33.0 in foundries and machine shops
- 33.0 in sawmills
- 32.0 in brick manufacturing
- 31.5 in automobiles
- 26.5 in blast furnaces and rolling mills

Hourly earnings (in cents):
- 72.5 in automobiles
- 65.5 in blast furnaces and rolling mills
- 60.0 in foundries and machine shops
- 45.0 in brick manufacturing
- 44.5 in sawmills

In five selected representative non-durable goods industries the average weekly hours and the average hourly earnings in November were --

Weekly hours:
- 41.0 in slaughtering and meat packing
- 36.5 in paper and pulp
- 34.5 in petroleum refining
- 34.0 in cotton-goods manufacturing
- 28.5 in tires and inner tubes

Hourly earnings (in cents):
- 80.0 in tires and inner tubes
- 76.0 in petroleum refining
- 54.5 in slaughtering and meat packing
- 53.0 in paper and pulp
- 38.0 in cotton-goods manufacturing

Compared with November 1933, there were no substantial changes in the average weekly hours of work in any of the 10 selected industries. Slightly longer hours prevailed in the production of automobiles, brick manufacturing, and in slaughtering and meat packing. In the other selected industries the weekly hours of work either remained unchanged or decreased slightly.

Average hourly earnings in all the 10 selected industries were higher in November than a year ago. The increases ranged from 1.5 cents per hour in cotton-goods manufacturing to 9 cents per hour in tires and inner tubes.

Weekly Earnings. Factory workers in November earned on the average $18.85 per week, compared with $18.95 in October and $17.90 in November 1933. These earnings are based on total pay roll reports, which include part-time as well as full-time employees. The 1934 averages are based on the pay rolls of 25,507 establishments employing 3,554,575 wage earners. The 1933 average is calculated from reports of 18,047 establishments with 3,128,908 employees.

In the five representative durable goods industries the workers employed earned per week --
- $22.80 in automobiles
- 19.90 in foundries and machine shops
- 17.45 in blast furnaces and rolling mills
- 14.55 in sawmills
- 14.35 in brick manufacturing

In the five selected non-durable goods industries the average weekly earnings of the workers employed were --
- $26.10 in petroleum refining
- 23.05 in slaughtering and meat packing
- 22.65 in tires and inner tubes
- 19.30 in paper and pulp
- 12.75 in cotton-goods manufacturing

Petroleum refining was the only one of the 10 selected industries in which the weekly wage income of the workers employed was slightly lower than a year ago. In the other 9 selected industries the weekly wage incomes of the workers employed in November were larger than a year ago. The increases varied in amounts from approximately 15 cents per week in cotton-goods manufacturing to $3.20 per week in slaughtering and meat packing.

Employment, Pay Rolls, Wages and Hours in Certain Nonmanufacturing Industries

Bituminous Coal. The bituminous-coal industry in November 1934 supplied employment to 366,000 workers, -- 2,300 more than in October. The weekly pay roll was estimated at $6,445,000. At the average rate of 71.5 cents per hour, the miners' weekly income was $19.15 for 26.5 hours of work.

There were 22,700 more workers employed in mining bituminous coal in November of this year than in November 1933. The weekly pay roll was $840,000 larger. Hourly earnings were 13.5 cents higher. Though averaging approximately 3 hours less per week, the weekly income of the individual miner was $1.75 higher than a year ago.

Class I Steam Railways. The total number of workers employed on class I steam railways in November, exclusive of executive officials and staff assistants, was approximately 967,000. The wage bill for the entire month was estimated at $119,000,000, with the average monthly earnings of the individual employee estimated at $116.

Class I steam railways employed 32,000 fewer workers in November of this year than a year ago. The monthly pay roll, however, was $4,350,000 larger, with the result that the average wage of the individual workers was $7 per month larger than a year ago.

Electric Railroads. Employment on electric railroads in November was estimated at 191,500, with a weekly pay roll of $5,285,000. Average earnings were 60.5 cents per hour. The workers earned $27.55 per week for 45 hours of work.

Telephone and Telegraph. Employment in November is estimated at 375,000, with an average weekly pay roll of $10,440,000. Hourly earnings averaged 73.5 cents, and the employees made approximately $27.35 per week for 38 hours of work.

Power and Light. The power and light industry in November supplied jobs to 274,000 workers at an estimated weekly pay roll of $7,565,000. Employment averaged 39 hours per week. At the rate of 76 cents per hour, the worker's weekly income was $29.50.

Hotels. Employment in the hotel industry in November was estimated at 263,000 and the weekly pay roll at $3,405,000. Employees averaged 28 cents per hour and $13.40 per week for 47 hours of work.

Laundries. Laundry establishments throughout the country employed approximately 187,500 workers in November. The total weekly pay roll was estimated at $2,805,000. Employment averaged 39 hours per week. At the rate of 37 cents per hour, the worker's weekly income was estimated at $14.80.

Dyeing and Cleaning. Employment in dyeing and cleaning establishments throughout the country in November was estimated at 44,800, with an average weekly pay roll of $787,000. Earnings averaged 43.5 cents per hour. The workers employed averaged 39.5 hours and made $17.30 per week.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN NOVEMBER 1934

Agriculture

Farm Income. The total cash income of farmers from all sources in November was estimated by the Department of Agriculture at $559,000,000. Income from the marketings of farm products accounted for $488,000,000, compared with $630,000,000 in October and $512,000,000 in November of last year. Income from farm marketings usually declines sharply from October to November.

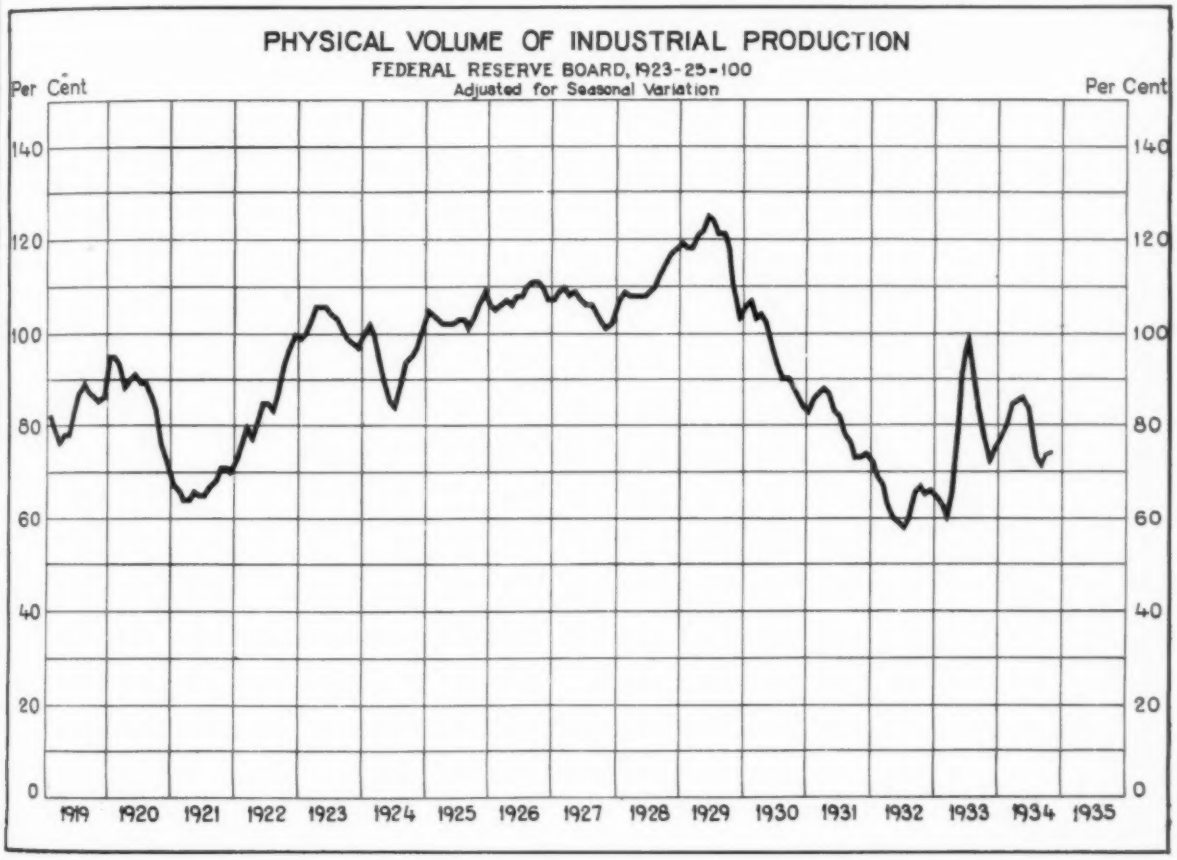
Rental and benefit payments to farmers cooperating with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in the production adjustment programs amounted to $59,000,000 in November compared with $76,000,000 in October and $12,000,000 in November 1933. In the drought areas farmers received additional income from the sale of cattle and sheep to the government, estimated at $7,000,000.

Industry and Trade

The rate of industrial activity, as reported by the Federal Reserve Board, showed little change in November. Distribution of commodities to consumers was well maintained. In the steel industry output continued to increase during November and the first 3 weeks of December, contrary to the usual seasonal tendency. Automobile production also showed an increase in the early part of December, following a decline in connection with preparations for new models.

Retail sales generally have been well maintained. Department store sales increased by slightly less than the estimated seasonal amount in November, but preliminary reports for the first half of December indicate a more than seasonal increase in Christmas trade.

Physical Volume of Industrial Production. The chart of physical volume of industrial production presented below tells what happened to industrial production in the United States from January 1919 through November 1934. The 3 years, 1923-1925, are used as the base period from which the month to month changes in industrial production are measured. The index of industrial production for November 1934 is represented by the last point of the curve. It is approximately 74. This indicates that for every 100 units of commodities (automobiles, tons of coal mined, cars of freight loaded, bales of cotton consumed, etc.) produced per month during the base period, 1923-25, there were 74 such units produced in November 1934.



Business Profits

The aggregate net business profits of 290 industrial and mercantile concerns analyzed by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York was $430,500,000 during the first 9 months of 1934, compared with $100,000 during the first 9 months of 1932. The 1934 profits were $227,700,000 larger than during the corresponding period in 1933.

The food and food products industries show the largest profits of any one group. They amounted to 96.3 million dollars. Chemicals and drugs followed with 78.2 million and the oil industries with 41.8 million dollars. The steel industries, included in the report, were the only group which suffered a substantial loss during the 9-month period. It amounted to 7½ million dollars. This loss, however, was 43.8 million dollars smaller than during the first 9 months of 1933 and 95.7 million dollars smaller than during the corresponding period in 1932.

NET BUSINESS PROFITS and LOSSES*

FOR THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1934, 1933, and 1932

CORPORATION GROUPS	1934	1933	1932
Total, 290 companies	$ 430,500,000	$ 202,800,000	$ 100,000
Automobile	86,600,000	82,500,000	*18,700,000*
Automobile parts and accessories (excluding tires) .	21,500,000	6,900,000	*8,800,000*
Aviation	1,200,000	2,800,000	*3,300,000*
Building supplies	700,000	*3,800,000*	*5,500,000*
Chemicals and drugs	78,200,000	54,700,000	41,900,000
Clothing and textiles . . .	900,000	2,400,000	*3,700,000*
Coal and coke	1,400,000	*2,800,000*	*4,000,000*
Copper	*100,000*	*3,600,000*	*4,700,000*
Electrical equipment	14,000,000	*700,000*	1,100,000
Food and food products . . .	96,300,000	90,100,000	89,200,000
Household equipment	800,000	*200,000*	*2,800,000*
Machinery.	4,400,000	*5,000,000*	*8,400,000*
Metals and mining (excluding copper, coal and coke) . .	26,200,000	15,400,000	5,000,000
Motion picture and amusement	2,500,000	200,000	*10,700,000*
Office equipment	9,700,000	3,700,000	1,000,000
Oil.	41,800,000	*7,900,000*	20,400,000
Paper	1,600,000	900,000	*700,000*
Printing and publishing. . .	5,500,000	1,500,000	5,500,000
Railroad equipment	3,700,000	*4,900,000*	*2,800,000*
Shipping	600,000	1,100,000	800,000
Steel.	*7,500,000*	*51,300,000*	*103,200,000*
Tobacco	2,800,000	700,000	1,900,000
Miscellaneous	37,700,000	20,100,000	10,600,000

**Losses in Italic Type*

Business and Industrial Barometers

Automobiles. Total production of passenger cars and trucks in the United States in November is estimated at 78,500 units -- 54,000 cars less than in October, but 17,700 cars more than in November 1933.

Bituminous Coal. Total estimated output of bituminous coal was 30,300,000 net tons -- 2,300,000 tons less than in October and 600,000 tons less than a year ago.

Building Permits. The estimated value of the total building construction permits issued in 778 identical cities in November was $42,000,000 -- $7,000,000 less than in October but $6,500,000 more than in November of last year.

Cotton Textiles. The cotton-textile industry consumed 485,000 bales of raw cotton in November -- 19,000 bales less than in October and 19,000 bales less than in November 1933.

Electric Power. Estimated production of electric power in November was 1,689 million kilowatt hours per week -- 23 million kilowatt hours per week more than in October and 93 million kilowatt hours per week more than in November of last year.

Railroad Freight Car Loadings. Class I railroads in November averaged 566,500 cars of freight per week -- 66,500 cars per week less than in October and 6,000 cars per week less than in November 1933.

Retail Trade. Total value of sales of two large mail order houses in November was $60,600,000 -- $3,500,000 less than in October but $8,300,000 more than a year ago.

Steel. Total production of steel ingots in November was 1,589,000 tons--127,000 tons more than in October and 68,000 tons more than in November a year ago.

WHAT HAPPENED TO PRICES IN NOVEMBER 1934

Wholesale Prices. The general level of wholesale commodity prices in November 1934 was practically the same as in October. Wholesale prices were 7.5 percent higher than in November 1933. The Bureau of Labor Statistics index of wholesale prices was 76.5 in November 1934 compared with 100 in 1926, 71.1 in November 1933, and 63.9 in November 1932. In other words, in November 1934, $76.50 could buy at wholesale the same amount of commodities that cost $100 in 1926. The same commodities cost $71.10 in November 1933 and $63.90 in November 1932.

INDEX OF WHOLESALE PRICES

	1926	November 1934	November 1933	Increase (+) or decrease (-) Nov.1933 to November 1934
	Index	Index	Index	Percent
All commodities	100	76.5	71.1	+ 7.6
Farm products	100	70.8	56.6	+ 25.1
Raw materials	100	72.2	62.4	+ 15.7
Semimanufactured articles	100	71.1	71.4	- 0.4
Finished products	100	79.3	75.2	+ 5.5

Retail Food Prices. Retail food prices in November 1934 were slightly lower than in October. They were 7.5 percent higher than in November 1933, but 26.6 percent lower than in November 1928. The Bureau of Labor Statistics index of retail food prices in November 1934 was 71.5, compared with 100 in 1926 and 66.5 in November 1933. In other words, for every dollar's worth of food bought in retail markets during 1926, the purchaser paid 71½ cents in November of this year, 66½ cents in November a year ago, and 96 cents in November 1928.

A list of average retail prices of some of the principal foodstuffs consumed in American households is given below. The prices are for November 1934 and November 1933, and are averaged for the country as a whole. The table also shows the price changes that have occurred over the 12-month period. The changes are given in cents and in percentages.

AVERAGE RETAIL FOOD PRICES FOR THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE

November 1934 and November 1933

Item	Retail Price		Increase (+) or decrease (-) November 1933 to November 1934	
	Nov. 1934	Nov. 1933		
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Percent
Bread, pound.....	8.4	8.0	+ 0.4	+ 5.0
Butter, pound.....	34.7	28.4	+ 6.3	+ 22.2
Milk, quart.....	11.7	11.1	+ 0.6	+ 5.4
Eggs, dozen.....	39.7	35.4	+ 4.3	+ 12.1
Potatoes, pound....	1.7	2.3	- 0.6	- 26.1
Lard, pound.....	14.9	9.7	+ 5.2	+ 53.6
Pork chops, pound..	24.9	22.7	+ 2.2	+ 9.7
Round steak, pound.	28.0	25.3	+ 2.7	+ 10.7
Sugar, pound.....	5.7	5.6	+ 0.1	+ 1.8
Coffee, pound.....	28.0	26.6	+ 1.4	+ 5.3

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT AND RELIEF PROGRAM

Public Works. During November 475,000 wage earners received direct employment on construction projects of the Public Works Administration. The total pay roll for the month was approximately $28,000,000. The reduction in the number of workers employed on Public Works projects is due to the completion of some railroad work and to the seasonal decrease in road building.

Emergency Conservation Work. The Civilian Conservation Corps in November had a total enrollment of approximately 387,500, compared with 392,000 in October. Pay rolls amounted to $16,600,000.

Emergency Work Program. The Emergency Work Program of the Federal Relief Administration provided relief work to nearly 2,000,000 applicants in November -- an increase of approximately 600,000 over the previous month. Pay roll disbursements for the month totalled $52,000,000.

Emergency Relief. Preliminary reports received by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration from 145 cities or urban counties indicate that between October and November the number of cases (resident families and single persons) receiving emergency relief from public funds increased 2 percent. Expenditures for emergency relief increased 8 percent.

The total number of families receiving unemployment relief in these 145 communities rose from 1,975,000 in October to 2,021,000 in November. Total expenditures rose by approximately $4,500,000, from $58,800,000 in October to $63,300,000 in November.

QUESTION AND ANSWER DEPARTMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has received a number of requests to discuss in the Labor Information Bulletin questions related to the national income in the United States. Most of the questions appear to have been stimulated by two books recently published on the subject. The first is a report published last winter by the Department of Commerce, entitled "The National Income, 1929-1932." The second is a more recent book on "America's Capacity to Consume", published by the Brookings Institution at Washington, D. C. The answers given below are based on the facts and conclusions presented in these two books.

1. WHAT IS MEANT BY THE NATIONAL INCOME?

The food we produce on the farm, the houses we build, the clothing and shoes we manufacture, the factories we equip to build cars and locomotives, the trips we make by railroad, steamship, or in airplanes, the services we get at hotels and barber shops, the entertainment supplied by the theater, movies, and over the radio -- these and millions of other goods produced and services rendered in the country during a whole year constitute our real national income. Expressed in dollars and cents, it is distributed in wages, salaries, rent, interest, and profits to the various elements of the population.

2. HOW BIG IS OUR NATIONAL INCOME? HOW MUCH HAS IT GROWN SINCE 1900?

The annual total national income of the United States measured in dollars is estimated by the Brookings Institution and the Department of Commerce as follows: 1900, 17 billion dollars; 1910, 29 billion; 1920, 67 billion; 1929, 82 billion, and 1932, 39 billion. During these years the prices of the goods and services which constitute our national income have also changed drastically. These figures do not, therefore, reflect the real changes in the quantities of goods produced and services rendered. After making the necessary adjustments to eliminate the effects of price changes, the Brookings Institution found that the real national income, that is, the quantity of goods and services produced, increased 120 percent between 1900 and 1929.

The decline in the national income between 1929 and 1932 was due in large part to falling prices. The real national income in 1932 was 30 percent smaller than in 1929.

Between 1900 and 1929 the population of the country increased by 60 percent, from 76 to 122 million. Because of this growth in the population, the 120 percent increase in the total real national income between 1900 and 1929 amounted to a 38 percent increase in the average real income of each individual in the country. In other words, in 1929 one-third again as many goods and services were available on the average to each man, woman, and child as in 1900.

This slow rise of our real national income enabled the Brookings Institution to conclude that "the striking fact is not so much that the production of our industrial establishments has increased in the 30 years, but that it has increased so little. The increase represents only an average annual gain over 1900 of about 1.3 percent. In view of the great technical achievements during the first 3 decades of this century, this gain in income does not appear remarkable."

3. WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF THE NATIONAL INCOME?

Nearly one-fourth of every dollar's worth of goods and services distributed in 1929 came from manufacturing industries. About one-sixth came from trade. Agriculture accounted for one-tenth of the total income. Transportation and communication was responsible for 9 cents out of every dollar distributed in 1929; government for 8 cents; personal and domestic services, 4½ cents; construction, 4 cents; professional services, 4 cents; mines and quarries, 2½ cents. Insurance and banking were each responsible for less than 2 cents of every dollar of the total national income distributed in 1929. The values of the goods and services produced by manufacturing, trade, professional and other services, and the percentages which each contributed to the total national income distributed in 1929, are shown in the following table:

Production Sources of National Income, 1929

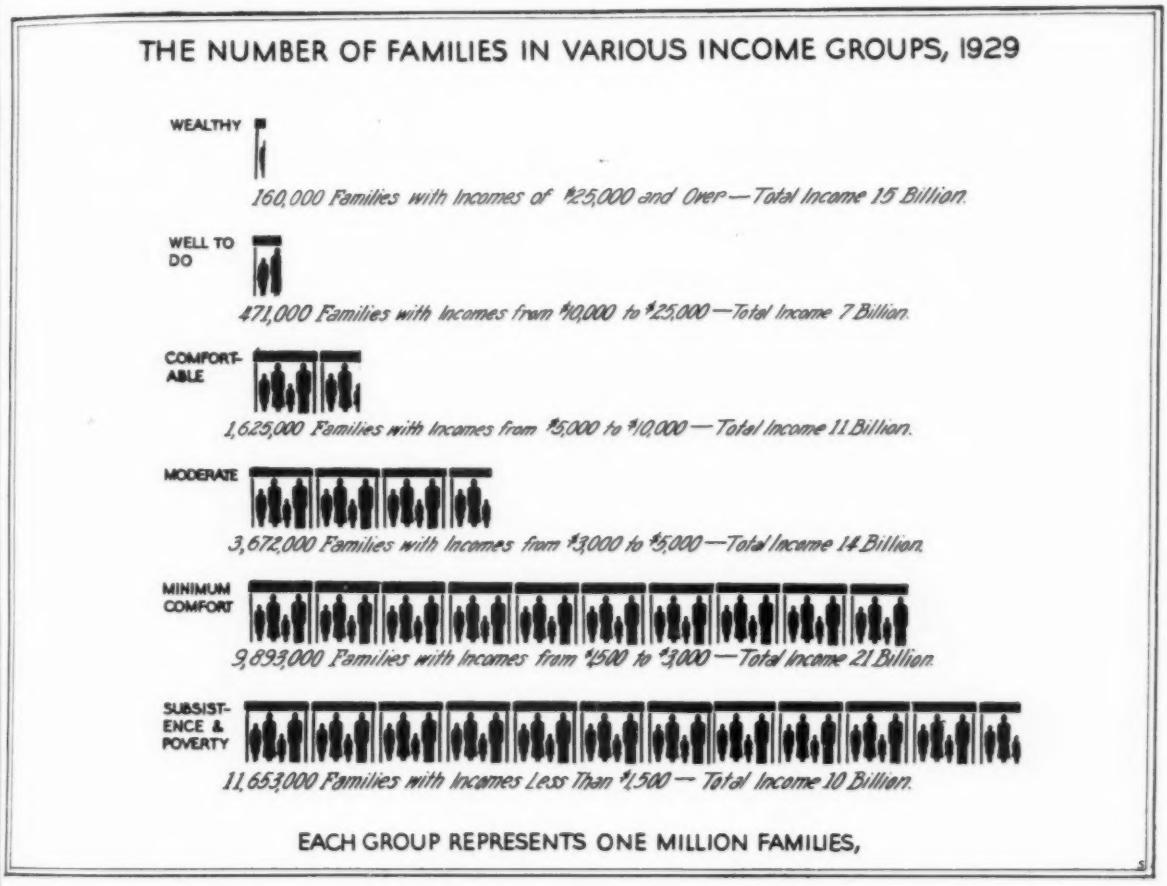
Source	Income	
	Billion Dollars	Percent of total
Total	79.8	100.0
Manufacturing	18.7	23.4
Trade	13.5	16.9
Agriculture	8.3	10.4
Transportation and communication	7.4	9.2
Government	6.7	8.4
Personal and domestic services	3.8	4.7
Construction	3.3	4.2
Professional services	3.3	4.1
Mines and quarries	2.1	2.7
Insurance	1.4	1.8
Banking	1.4	1.7
Unclassified	9.3	12.5

4. IS IT TRUE THAT MORE THAN 7 OUT OF EVERY 10 FAMILIES IN THE UNITED STATES RECEIVED IN 1929 INCOMES OF LESS THAN $2,500?

Yes. On the basis of the 1930 census it is estimated that at the end of 1929 there were 27,474,000 families in the United States consisting of more than one person per family. These families received in 1929 an aggregate income of about 77 billion dollars. Had this income been evenly divided, each family would have received an income of $2,800. In reality, half the families had an income of less than $1,700, and 2 out of every 10 families had incomes less than $1,000. Nearly 20 million families, or 7[illegible] percent of the total, had incomes less than $2,500.

The aggregate income of the 11,650,000 families with incomes of less than $1,500 was about 10 billion dollars. Approximately the same aggregate amount was received by 36,000 families with incomes in excess of

$75,000. In other words, one-tenth of one percent of all the families in the United States at the top of the income list received practically the same income as 42 percent of the families at the bottom of the scale.


THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES IN VARIOUS INCOME GROUPS, 1929
WEALTHY
160,000 Families with Incomes of $25,000 and Over—Total Income 15 Billion.
WELL TO DO
471,000 Families with Incomes from $10,000 to $25,000—Total Income 7 Billion.
COMFORT-ABLE
1,625,000 Families with Incomes from $5,000 to $10,000—Total Income 11 Billion.
MODERATE
3,672,000 Families with Incomes from $3,000 to $5,000—Total Income 14 Billion.
MINIMUM COMFORT
9,893,000 Families with Incomes from $1,500 to $3,000—Total Income 21 Billion.
SUBSIST-ENCE & POVERTY
11,653,000 Families with Incomes Less Than $1,500—Total Income 10 Billion.
EACH GROUP REPRESENTS ONE MILLION FAMILIES.

5. CAN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE CONSUME AS MUCH AS THEY HAVE THE CAPACITY TO PRODUCE?

The Brookings Institution study concludes that the people in the United States, even at the peak of prosperity in 1929, were not successful in satisfying their wants fully or even to a reasonably satisfactory degree, and that if all the families with incomes of less than $2,500 had had their incomes raised to that level, our consumption expenditures would have increased by an amount of more than 16 billion dollars. The food expenditures of the 19,400,000 families with incomes less than $2,500 in 1929 would have risen from 10 to 14 billion dollars; home maintenance from 7 to 11 billion; attire and adornment from 4 to 6 billion; and other consumers' goods and services from 5 to 10 billion dollars.

The final conclusion of the Brookings Institution is that "vast potential demands for basic commodities and for conventional necessities exist in the unfulfilled wants of the masses of the people, both rural and urban.... It would require but a moderate increase in the consumption of the millions whose standards of living even in 1929 were below the requirements for health and efficiency, to absorb the full productive capacity of the United States."

In This Issue

the Bureau of Labor Statistics

Inaugurates its First

QUESTION AND ANSWER DEPARTMENT

which was announced in the first number

of the

Labor Information Bulletin

Questions and suggestions for this
department should be forwarded to the
Bureau of Labor Statistics
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D. C.